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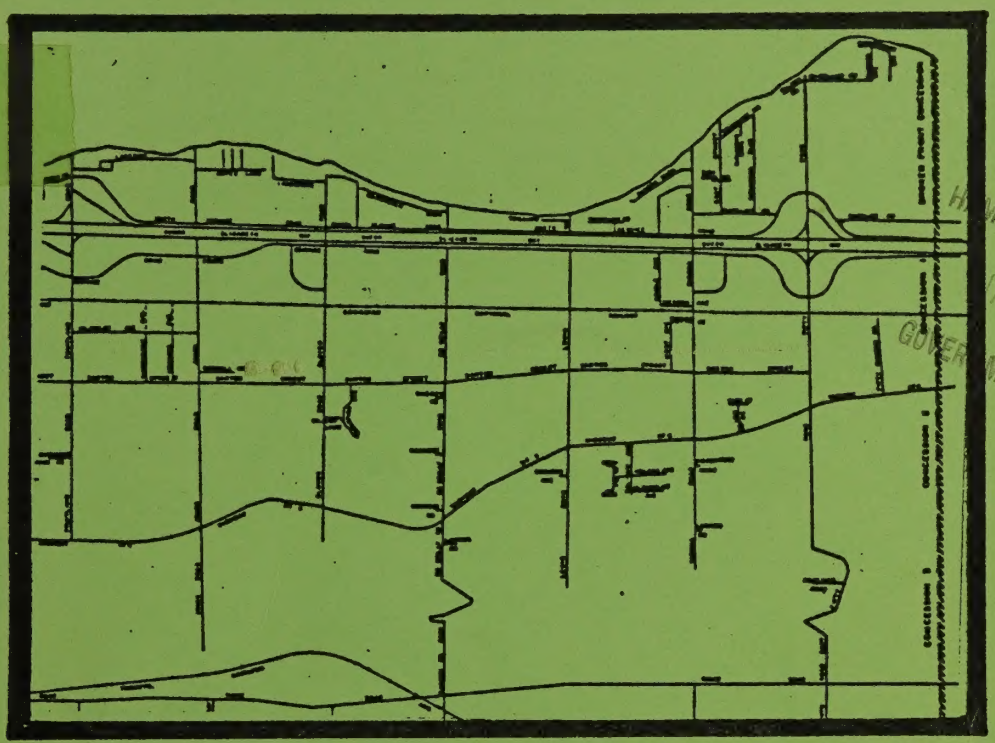
TOWN OF STONEY CREEK



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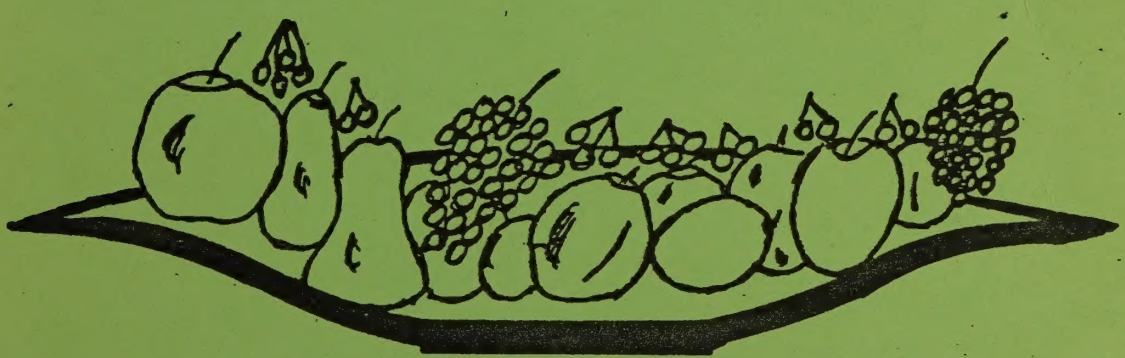

FRUIT FARM SURVEY

Prepared By
Planning Department
February 1981

File No. 071-01
February 10, 1981

MEMORANDUM NO 12-81

To: The Chairman and Members of the Town of Stoney Creek Planning Committee

Re: Town of Stoney Creek Fruit Farm Survey

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Attached for the Committee's consideration is the Fruit Farm Survey completed by the Town of Stoney Creek Planning Department. The Survey's main objective was to provide basic research information to assist in the formulation of farm policies for the Town's Official Plan.

The Winona-Fruitland Area as well as a strip of land immediately above the Escarpment and north of Ridge Road, were selected for this Study as these areas have been normally identified as the Town of Stoney Creek's fruit producing area. The Town's Industrial Corridor, the Niagara Escarpment face and the Winona Urban Community as identified by the Regional Official Plan, were not considered by the Survey. The Study's main findings and recommendations are included at the beginning of the attached Fruit Farm Survey.

Subsequent to the completion of this Survey, a detailed submission from a fruit farmer regarding fruit land preservation in Stoney Creek was received by this Department. For the Committee's information this submission has been attached to this memorandum as it was considered to contain relevant opinions regarding existing fruit farm operations within the Survey's Study Area.

It is recommended that the Survey be adopted as basic information and that the recommendations contained therein be used as a basis for Official Plan policy formulation and further action. It is further recommended that this Survey be forwarded to the Regional Planning and Development Department, Dr. L. Reeds of McMaster University and to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food for their information.

Respectfully submitted,

R. M. Marini

R. M. Marini, M.C.I.P.
Director of Planning

MN/RMM/mf
Attach.

TOWN OF STONEY CREEK

FRUIT FARM SURVEY

Approved by Council
on
February 24, 1981

Resolution #6-3

Prepared by

Planning Department Staff

February, 1981

TOWN OF STONEY CREEK

FRUIT FARM SURVEY

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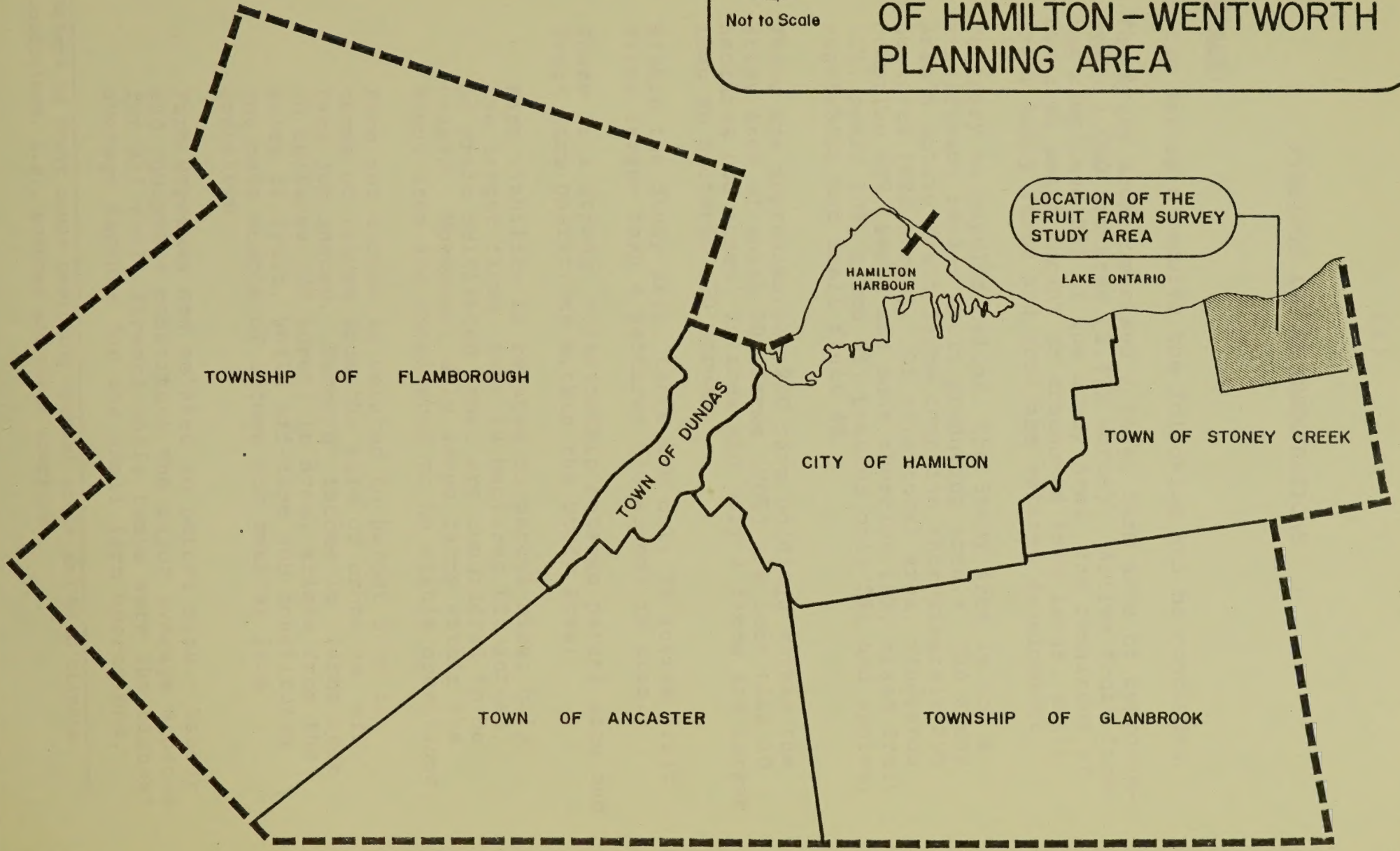
TOWN OF STONEY CREEK FRUIT FARM SURVEY WITHIN THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH PLANNING AREA

Not to Scale



FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings:

From the Survey's results the following can be concluded.

1. The Study Area comprises a total farm area of approximately 1,000 hectares (2,470 acres). Active fruit farming comprises 33% of the Study Area, the remainder of the area being vacant or abandoned farm lands, small fruit hobby farms and non-farm related development.

2. Contrary to popular belief, the Study Area is not a significant tender fruit producing area.* The Study Area's active fruit farms comprise approximately 335 hectares (828 acres). Of this total area, vineyards comprise 49%; sweet and sour cherries 19%; mixed fruit 11%; pears 10%; plums 4%; peaches only 3%; and apples, vegetables and small fruit 4%.

3 There are approximately 230 farm holdings within the Study Area of which 205 farms (90%) are less than 10 hectares (25 acres) in area and only 4 farms are larger than 20 hectares (50 acres).

4. Within the Study Area, there are only 29 active fruit farms larger than 4 hectares (10 acres) in area.

5. There is a strong relationship between parcel size and fruit farm operations within the Study Area:

   - Farm viability is related to parcel size; only the larger farms, over 10 hectares (25 acres) of fruit cultivated area, are considered to be viable. Moreover, only seven farms within the Study Area are considered to be viable operations.

   - Farm net income is related to parcel size in terms of income from the sale of crops vs. off-farm job income. Farmers' income in farms over 10 hectares (25 acres) in area, arises from the sales of fruit, while off-farm job constitutes the main source of income for smaller farm operators.

   - Farm expenses are related to parcel size. Labour and equipment constitute the major average expense for all fruit farmers while taxes were the highest average expense for the small farm operations.

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*Refers to fruit crops requiring special soils and mild climate conditions, i.e., peaches and sweet cherries.

. Farmers' future plans are related to parcel size; all farmers operating farms over 16 hectares (40 acres) in area, indicated their intention to maintain or expand farm operations while cut-back intentions were observed in smaller farms.

6. Respecting labour within the Study Area, 87% of total fruit farm labour was occasional workers at peak season, 10%were part time employees and only 3% were full time farm employees.

7. With reference to fruit marketing only 59% of farmers reporting to the Survey are under cannery contract while 41% of farm operators sell directly to consumers.

8. With reference to farm tenure, 86% of fruit farmers reporting to the Survey are land owners and 14% rent the farm from someone else.

9. According to the farmers' responses, the most pressing problems affecting fruit production within the Study Area are: low price of produce; competition from import produce; high cost of labour and equipment; high cost of land to expand and poor soil capability in certain areas.

10. Farmers' opinions are that existing conditions affecting fruit production within the Study Area do not warrant preservation except for some large farms.

11. Farmers' opinions indicate also that preservation of fruit farming in Stoney Creek can only be done by a drastic re-organization of the fruit marketing process; by lowering farmers' realty taxes; by identifying good productive lands and leaving it for farming and by establishing Government policies to subsidize the purchase of additional land.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that this Survey be adopted as basic information and it is further recommended that:

1. The Official Plan policies provide for the consolidation of farm lands and the discouragement of the subdivision of farm land within the Study Area.

2. Where possible, Official Plan policy encourage the continuation and expansion of fruit farming.

3. The farm parcel size for fruit farming be established in the implementing By-law at a minimum of 10 hectares.

4. The Official Plan establish policies to encourage the preservation of prime agricultural lands for fruit production and that non-agricultural uses be directed away from such lands.

5. The Official Plan provide on a limited basis for uses necessary and ancillary for the agricultural area such as farm related industrial and commercial uses (e.g., fruit processing plants, produce storage facilities, fruit produce markets, nurseries, green houses, etc.).

6. The Council request the Regional Council to approach higher levels of government for incentives for farm expansion, continuation of fruit farm operations and marketing considerations.

TOWN OF STONEY CREEK

FRUIT FARM SURVEY

I - Introduction

In September, 1980, Planning Department Staff undertook a Fruit Farm Survey in order to evaluate existing conditions affecting fruit production within the Town. The main purpose of this Survey was to assist in the formulation of farm policies to be included in the Town's new Official Plan for the Town's rural area.

II - The Study Area

The Study Area of the Survey refers to the Town's rural area north of Ridge Road and comprises a total farm area of approximately 1,000 hectares (2,470 acres) mainly located on the Town's lake plain. [1] The Study Area is presently designated for Rural purposes by the Town's Official Plan and by the new Regional Official Plan approved in June, 1980. This area was selected for the Fruit Farm Survey as it has been traditionally considered as part of the "Niagara Fruit Belt Area" due to its favourable climate for fruit production. At the present time, however, future farm development of this area constitutes a controversial issue as the area has experienced a high degree of ownership fragmentation and a large proportion of the farms have been abandoned or are not viable farm operations, i.e., within the Study Area there are approximately 230 farm holdings, of which

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[1] See Attached Appendix A, "Study Area Map", Page 22
Study Area excludes Stoney Creek Industrial Corridor, Escarpment Face and Winona as defined by the Regional Official Plan.

25 farms are over 10 hectares (25 acres) in area and only 4 farms are over 20 hectares (50 acres) in area. Moreover, farms less than 10 hectares (25 acres) in area comprise 71% of the total Study Area.[1] Respecting land use, a large part of the Study Area consists of vacant or abandoned fruit land or non-farm related development. The remainder of the Study Area is dedicated to the growing of tree fruit and vines, making the majority of fruit farms small hobby farms.[2]

III - How Study was Undertaken

To assess existing conditions affecting fruit production within the Town, 114 questionnaire forms were mailed out by Planning Staff to the owners of land of 4.0 hectares (10 acres) or more within the Survey's Study Area. The list of land owners within the Study Area was obtained from the 1980 Assessment Listing. The mailed out questionnaire was prepared by Planning Staff with the assistance of Dr. L. Reeds, Professor of Agricultural Geography at McMaster University. The questionnaire, which was approved by Council at its meeting of September 11, 1980, requested information such as land use, farm operation, labour, farm viability and general opinions regarding fruit land preservation in Stoney Creek.[3]

---

[1] See Attached Appendix B - "Study Area Property Size Table" & Appendix C - "Parcel Size Graph" Source: 1980 Regional Assessment Information.

[2] Source: Town of Stoney Creek Planning Department, 1980 - Land Use Mapping. It is noted that there are also a couple of small mixed farms and one field crop farm north of Ridge Road within the Study Area.

[3] See Attached Appendix D "Fruit Farm Questionnaire" and covering letter indicating reasons for the Survey. Page 25.

Through the questionnaire the basic data of the Survey were obtained. Where additional information was considered to be necessary, the information was obtained by means of phone calls or personal interviews with fruit farmers. Once the final data were collected, Staff proceeded to analyse the information. During this process, Planning Department Staff carried out some informal discussions with fruit farm related Agencies in order to obtain the Agencies' views on the Survey's results.[1]

IV - Main Findings

The following are the main results of the Town of Stoney Creek Fruit Farm Survey:

i) GENERAL RESPONSES

a)	Total No. of Questionnaires sent out	114	-
b)	Returned due to unknown address	5	-
c)	Total No. of Farms surveyed	109	100%
d)	Total No. of responses	41	38%

1) OWNERSHIP

a)	Total No. of Responses	41	100%
b)	Respondents who own and operate the farm	29	71%
c)	Respondents who rent the farm from someone else and operate the farm	4	10%
d)	Respondents who own land but the land is not in agricultural production	8	19%

[1] Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Vineland Research Station and Food land Development Branch; McMaster University, Geography Department, Dr. Reeds, Professor, Agricultural Geography.

e)	Respondents who own additional lands elsewhere	11	27%
2)	FARM OPERATION		
a)	Total farms under active agricultural operation	33	-
b)	Those farms under agricultural operation other than fruit farming	4	-
c)	Those farms producing fruit at the present time.	29	100%
d)	No. of full time fruit farmers	19	65%
e)	Those who have an off-farm job	9	31%
f)	Those who did not answer as to whether or not they are full time farmers	1	4%
3)	LAND USE (ACRES)		
a)	Total Cultivated Area reported by fruit farmers	828.5	100%
	. Grapes	401	49%
	. Pears	83	10%
	. Sweet Cherries	57	7%
	. Sour Cherries	101.5	12%
	. Mixed Fruit	93	11%
	. Plums	28	4%
	. Peaches	27	3%
	. Small Fruit	3	-
	. Apples	20	2%
	. Vegetables[1]	15	2%

[1]Fruit Farmers included vegetables, nursery products and green house products in their responses. See attached questionnaire - Appendix D

4) LABOUR

a)	Total No. of Fruit Farms Reported	29	-
b)	Total No. of Full Time Farm Employees	14	
c)	Total No. of Part Time Farm Employees	38	
d)	Total No. of occasional workers at peak season.	341	

5) FARM VALUE

a)	Present estimated average value per acre[1]	$8,700
b)	Estimated equipment value per holding:	
	10 - 20 acres -	$10,500
	20 - 65 acres -	$37,000
	150 - 200 acres -	$150,000

6) MARKETING

a)	Total Number of fruit farms reported in Survey	29	100%
b)	Those fruit farms under cannery contract	17	59%
c)	Those fruit farms which sell directly to consumers, truckers, shippers, pick-your-own, etc.	12	41%
d)	Total estimated average percentage of crops sold fresh	-	57%

---

[1] Indicated average farm value per acre as estimated by respondents.

7) EXPENSES

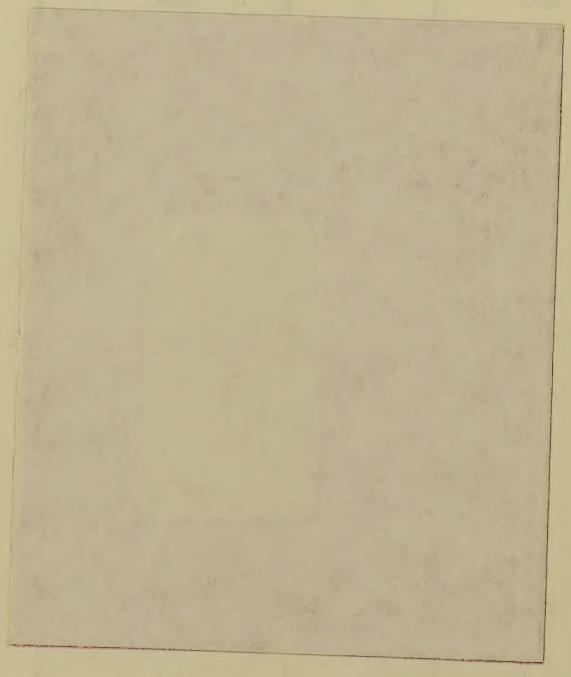
The following table shows the Survey's results regarding fruit farmers' expenses. The figures represent expense values expressed in average percentage according to farm size.

Farm Size (acres)	Labour %	Taxes %	Fertilizers %	Equipment %	Others* %	Total Expenses %
200	40	5	20	15	20	100
150	55	2	6	10	27	100
65	30	-***	5	50	15	100
40	50	5	25	10	10	100
37	35	15	10	15	25	100
35	38	12	20	15	15	100
34	40	- ***	20	30	10	100
23	7	20	15	30	28	100
20	13	5	10	66	6	100
18	15	10	8	17	50	100
15	-**	40	14	25	21	100
14	34	9	25	17	15	100
12	30	10	25	20	15	100
10	17	21	17	17	28	100
Estimated average expenses for all farm size	27	12	16	23	22	100

*Refers to general expenses such as baskets and boxes.

**Family labour.

***Farm rented out.



8) NET INCOME

The following Table shows the Survey's results regarding fruit farmers' net income values expressed in average percentages according to farm size:

Farm Size (acres)	Sales of Fruit %	Off Farm Income %	Total Income %
200	90	10	100
150	100	-	100
65	100	-	100
50	100	-	100
40	100	-	100
38	100	-	100
34	100	-	100
26	10	90	100
24	100	-	100
23	40	60	100
20	100	-	100
18	100	-	100
15	100	-	100
14	20	80	-
14	100	-	100
14	30	70	100
13	25	75	100
10	40	60	100
10	20	80	100
10	100	-	100
Estimated Aver. Net Income for all farm sizes	74	26	100

9) FUTURE PLANS

The following table shows the Survey's results in terms of fruit farmers' future plans.[1] The Table is organized according to farm size.

Property Size (acres)	Cut-back	Maintain	Expand
200		x	
150		x	
65			x
40		x	
34			x
40			x
38	x		
35	x		
26			x
23		x	
24		x	
20	x		
18		x	
15			x
15	x		
15		x	
14	x		
14			x
14		x	
13		x	
12	x		
12			x

[1] Total fruit farms responding to this question - 26 farms

cont'd...

Property Size (acres)	Cut-back	Maintain	Expand
11			x
10	x		
10		x	
10	x		
%	31%	38%	31%

10) FARM VIABILITY

The following Table was prepared according to farm size and was based on the fruit farmers' response to the following question: *

"Do you think your farm is a viable operation and can support you and your family?

Farm Size (acres)	Viable Farm Operation	Non-Viable Farm Operation
200	x	
150	x	
65	x	
40	x	
40	x	
37**		x
34	x	
35 **		x
26 **		x
25	x	
24 **		x
24 **		x
23		x
20		x
20		x
18		x
15		x
15		x

*Total number of fruit farms responding to this question - 28 farms

**Indicates that at least 35% of the total area of the farm is not under active cultivation.

cont'd....

10) FARM VIABILITY (cont'd)

Farm Size (acres)	Viable Farm Operation	Non-Viable Farm Operation
15		x
14		x
14		x
13		x
13		x
12		x
11		x
10		x
10		x
10		x
%	25%	75%

11) FARMERS OPINIONS

The following is a summary of the farmers' opinions in response to the Fruit Farm Questionnaire respecting the most pressing problems affecting fruit production and fruit land preservation in Stoney Creek. The farmers' opinions are organized according to farm size:

a) "WHAT ARE THE MOST PRESSING PROBLEMS FOR YOU AS A FRUIT FARMER?"

PARCEL SIZE (acres)	OPINIONS
10-14	. Competition from imports . Uncontrolled prices for what we buy . No buyers for the produce . Too many regulations from Government . A small farm can simply not provide the income that would make it economically viable. . Too much work, too many expenses and not enough income. . Price of product has not kept pace with expenses, e.g., 6 qt. cherries in 1950 = $2.25 " " " " 1980 = $4.50 Within 30 years prices have doubled while expenses have increased eight times.
15-25	. Land is not suitable for fruit farming. . Fruit prices inadequate. . Low return for produce . Long hours of work and small income. . Too high cost of labour, equipment and maintenance. . Cost of baskets, boxes, pickup truck and equipment. . Cost of labour and cost of land to expand. Price of produce.
26-34	. Inflationary cost for supplies especially fertilizers, while market prices of produce is too low. . Price of labour. . Interest rates and price of land too high to expand.

PARCEL SIZE (acres)	OPINIONS
35-64	. Market prices. e.g., in 1950 Basket of Peaches - $2.35 " in 1980 " " " - $3.00 However, in same period expenses have increased 6 times. . Cost of labour, taxes and hydro rates . Water problems (drought) . Snowmobiles and motorbikes cause damage . Soil is poor on many parts of the farm making it hard to grow crops, especially in dry years.
65-99	. Price of cherries are too low. . Cost of supplies
100+	. Sales revenue too low . Trespassing and vandalism including stealing. . Cost of labour

b) "ARE YOU IN FAVOUR OF THE PRESERVATION OF THE FRUIT BELT?"

10-14	. No, there is a lot of work and the income does not meet with the amount of labour put into the farm. . No. We pay all the expenses but receive only some privileges. Bus services have been cancelled, no sidewalks and no sewer system. . No. The soil is so changeable that it is impossible to get a large area of good soil to be set aside for profitable farming. Farming not compatible with urban area which is a constant source of irritation. . Yes, but on condition that small fruit farmer has protection against destructive price cycle because of which for most farming is only an avocation while work in the city must provide the basic income. . No. On one hand farming is treated as a business, on the other, cries for "preservation of the fruit belt", are based on sentimental attachment to the "good old days". If fruit farming is economically viable it can withstand any threat. If it is not nothing will save it.

PARCEL SIZE (acres)	OPINIONS
	. No. The farm being small, requires too much work and expense and there is not enough income.
	. No, in Stoney Creek in the Study Area where it is unreasonable from a financial aspect. Yes, in the Niagara Penninsula.
	. No, except for some large farms. It is impossible to make a living from farming alone.
	. No, because land in Winona is mostly red clay soil not suitable for farming.
15-25	. No. Not enough return per acreage.
	. No. Fruit prices are too low.
	. Yes, but only in areas where soil permits this.
	. No in the Study Area, yes beyond Winona.
	. Yes, but only for some good lands.
	. Yes. I believe farming is being self-sufficient for myself and also for the area.
	. No, cost of labour is too high
	. Yes, where viable. Part of the Study Area is not fit for fruit.
	. No, the economic outlook is extremely bleak; it would be more sensible to put the land to a more profitable use.
26-34	. No, market does not pay value for effort necessary to produce crop.
	. No, almost all the land covered by this Study does not warrant preservation.
	. Yes. Good climate.
35-64	. No. No use growing anything because it cannot be sold.
	. No, because of high costs.
	. No. Soil is too poor on many parts of the Study Area and the market for fruits is not stable.
	. Yes, in certain areas.
65-99	. Yes. I can live with fruit farming.
100+	. No, for small farms, and generally no under present market conditions.
	. No, in the area of the Town of Stoney Creek. Industrial, commercial and urban development has eroded all possible future expansion in order to maintain an economic operation. We are past a point of no return.

c) "IF YOU FAVOUR SAVING FRUIT LANDS IN STONEY CREEK HOW DO YOU BELIEVE THEY CAN BEST BE PRESERVED?"

PARCEL SIZE (acres)	OPINIONS
10-14	. There is not much left in Stoney Creek for farming. It's too expensive to restore the neglected areas. The area is all cut up now. The land is too expensive to farm.
	. The only way they can be preserved is to make fruit farming--whether large or small--a decent living. This can only be done by a drastic reorganization of the fruit marketing process; by a more equitable distribution of profits (farmer, middleman, retailer); by protection from undercutting by cheap imports, by development and maintenance of a viable canning and processing industry (canning; juices; dried fruit; distilling industry). If you are serious about preserving fruit lands, look to the disease, not the external symptoms.
	. To obtain better price on farming products. Government or Town should buy the land and rent it back to full time farmers (not part time). This way fruit land can be preserved; no other way.
15-25	. They can best be preserved by helping the farmers by way of lowering their realty taxes and by increasing the price of their products, thereby making it viable for them to make a living.(Applicable only in areas where soil is productive.)
	. The Fruit Belt in Stoney Creek is already non-existant. It is gone. Should have been preserved 30 years ago.
	. By identifying good productive lands and leave it only for farming.
	. By helping the farmer by making it possible to keep up the farm. Farm expenses are high and consequently the average farmer has to get another job to keep up with the cost of living. This in turn is a deterent in that it prevents the average farmer from putting all his time and efforts into producing a good and profitable crop.
26-34	That the Government seek out qualified farmers and subsidize them to buy up land that is adjacent to existing farm if land qualifies for fruit farming. There are only pockets of good land within the Study Area. (No more than 20%.) At the price

	of land no farmer can make a go of it on borrowed money. The only farmers still farming are the ones who owned the land in the sixty's and before.
	. Stop speculation of land
	. Fruit farming needs stable market.
35-64	. Bought by Government agencies and rented back to us for reasonable price.
	. If any land is to be preserved it should be only the best, like market garden soil. No use preserving hard clay. This land should be bought by the Government for the going price and rented out to <u>good</u> farmers to keep it well looked after.
	. Certain areas require more agricultural help from all levels of Government.
65-99	. Special policy is needed in order to facilitate loans to buy additional lands. Decrease taxes, stop speculation of land.
100+	. To attempt saving remaining fruit lands would be financial suicide for the land owner.

V - Discussion of Findings:

From the Survey's results it can be concluded that there are 29 active fruit farm operations within the Study Area, being all those farms over 4.0 hectares (10 acres).[1] These farms comprise a total fruit cultivated area of approximately 335 hectares (828 acres). The Survey's total farm area is approximately 1000 hectares (2470 acres); therefore, it can be assumed that active fruit farming comprises 33% of the Study Area and that vacant lands, abandoned fruit lands, small fruit hobby farms as well as non-farm related development, constitute 67% of the Study Area.

Respecting land use within the active fruit farming area, farmers reporting to the Survey indicated that approximately 50% of the fruit area is dedicated to grapes, 19% to sweet and sour cherries, 11% to mixed fruit, 10% to pears, 4% to plums, only 3% to peaches, 2% to apples and the remainder to small fruit and vegetables.[2]

Regarding land tenure within the Study Area, 86% of fruit farmers reporting to Survey are land owners and 14% have the farm rented from someone else.

With reference to fruit farm operation it can be concluded that approximately 35% of fruit farmers reporting to the Survey have an off-farm job and 65% are full time farmers. The Study's results show a clear relationship between full time farmers and the largest farms reporting to the Survey.

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[1] These constitute all of the operating farms of the Study Area as could be concluded by Staff.

[2] See Attached Appendix Graph E, "Land Use Within the Study Area". Page 30.

Furthermore, the farmers' responses to the question of labour indicate that during the year of the Survey there were 14 full time employees, 38 part time employees and 341 occasional workers at peak season within the Study Area

With respect to farm value, the present average estimated value per acre of land within the Study Area is $8700.00.[1] Estimated equipment value shows strong variations according to parcel size and type of farm operations. Respecting fruit marketing, 59% of the total fruit farms reporting to the Survey are under cannery contract, while 41% of the farms sell directly to consumers, truckers, shippers, pick your own etc.

Regarding fruit farm expenses, a summary of the farmers' response indicates that labour constitutes the major average expense for all fruit farmers within the Study Area. Equipment and fertilizers constitute other important expenses for all farm size farmers.[2] The Survey also indicates in a general way that the smaller the farm, the greater the percentage of farm expenses attributable to taxes.

Information obtained through this Survey also indicates that farm size is strongly related to farmers' net income in terms of income from the sales of crops vs. off-farm job income. e.g., net income from farms over 10 hectares (25 acres) in area

---

[1] Estimated land prices show strong variations according to location within the Study Area.

[2] See Table 7 "Expenses", page 6 of this Report.

[3] Pockets of vacant lands within a fruit farm usually corresponds to poorly drained areas.

arises from the sales of fruit, while smaller farm operators' income is mainly based on off farm jobs.[1]

With reference to the question of farmers' future plans, the Survey indicates that 31% of fruit farmers want to expand farm operations, 38% want to maintain operations and only 31% expressed their desire to cut back farm operations. These opinions are related also to farm size, e.g., all farmers operating farms over 16 hectares (40 acres) indicated their intention to maintain or expand farm operations. The intention to cut back operations was only indicated by operators of farms of less than 16 hectares (40 acres). However, interest in expansion was expressed by some large farm operators as well as some small farm operators.[2]

With respect to the question of farm viability, this Survey indicates that only 25% of the fruit farm operators responding to the Survey have viable farm operations that can support the farmer and his family. The remaining 75% of the total fruit farms reporting to the Survey constitute non-viable farm operations. Moreover, according to the Survey's results all the farms comprising more than 10 hectares (25 acres) of fruit cultivated area, constitute viable operations while all farms lesser than 10 hectares (25 acres) in area, are non-viable operations. This gives rise to the conclusion that within the Study Area there are only seven viable fruit farms, all of them being over 10 hectares (25 acres).[3]

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[1] See Table 8 "Net Income", Page 7 of this Report.

[2] See Table 9 "Future Plans", Page 8 of this Report.

[3] See Table 10 "Farm Viability", Page 10 of this Report

The farmers' response with respect to the most pressing problems affecting fruit production within the Study Area, indicate also that small farms simply cannot provide the income that would make it economically viable. With reference to the same question, farmers' responses at any level of parcel size, indicate that low price of produce, competition from import produce, high cost of labour and high cost of equipment and fertilizers, as well as high cost of land to expand farm operations, constitute the most pressing problems affecting fruit production within the Study Area. Poor soil capability on certain areas as well as property trespassing and vandalism constitute other important problems expressed by fruit farmers.

The farmers' responses to the question of preservation of the Fruit Belt in Stoney Creek are very pessimistic, especially for small farm operations. In general, the farmer's opinion is that existing conditions affecting fruit production within the Study Area do not warrant preservation except for some large farms. Farmers indicate that soil is too poor in many parts of the Study Area, the land is too cut up, the fruit market is unstable and does not pay value for effort to produce crops, and urban development is a constant source of irritation.

Finally, with reference to the question of what should be done to preserve fruit farming in Stoney Creek, farmers indicate that this can only be done by a drastic re-organization of

the fruit marketing process; by lowering farmers' realty taxes; by identifying good productive lands and leaving it only for farming; by helping the farmer to keep up the farm without the necessity of an off-farm job; by establishing Government policies to subsidize the purchase of additional lands and by stopping speculation of adjacent lands. Notwithstanding the foregoing opinions, some farmers indicate that all these measures to preserve fruit farming should have been taken thirty years ago and that today the Fruit Belt in Stoney Creek is no longer in existence.

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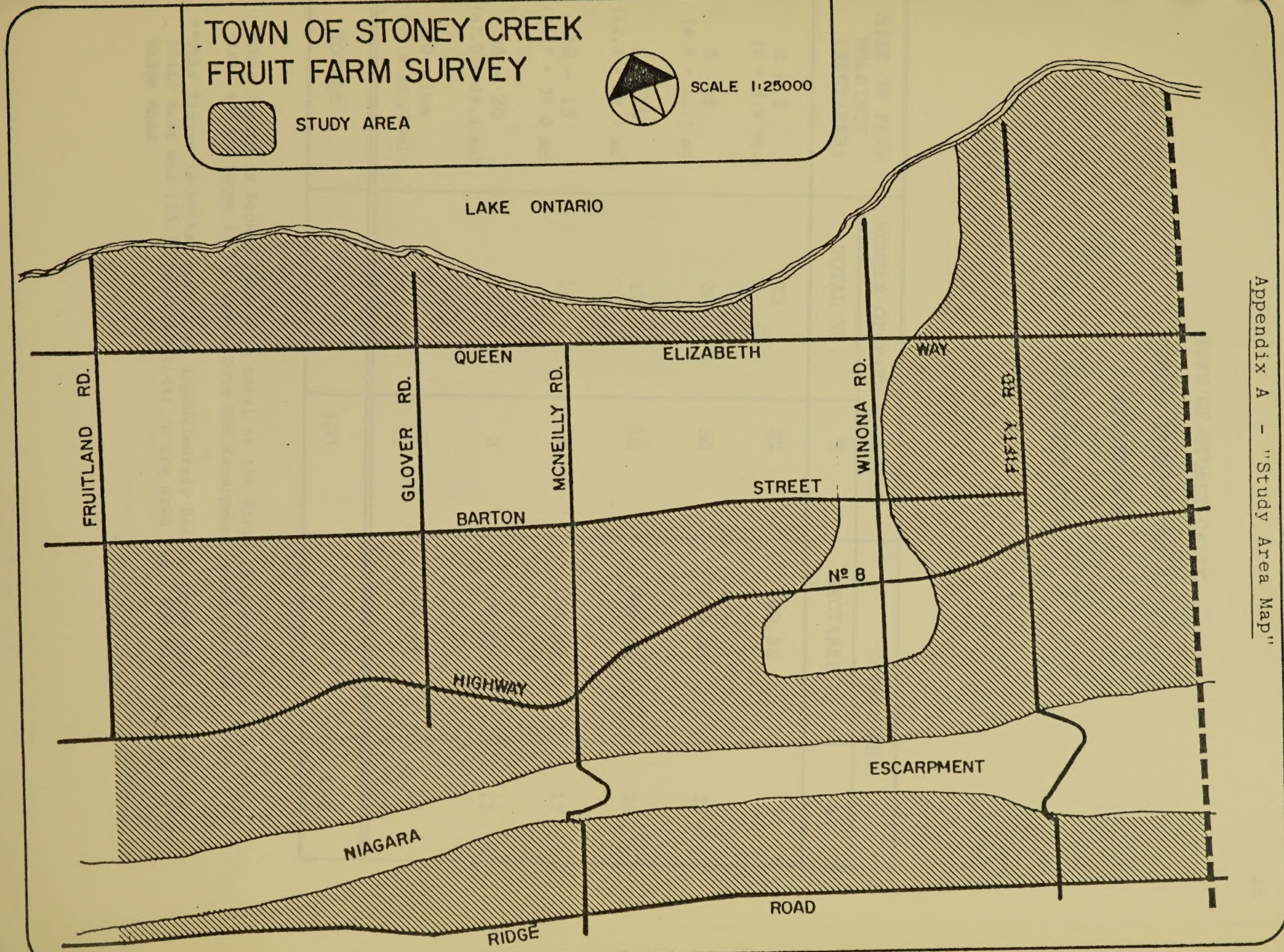


Appendix A - "Study Area Map"

TOWN OF STONEY CREEK

FRUIT FARM SURVEY

APPENDIX B

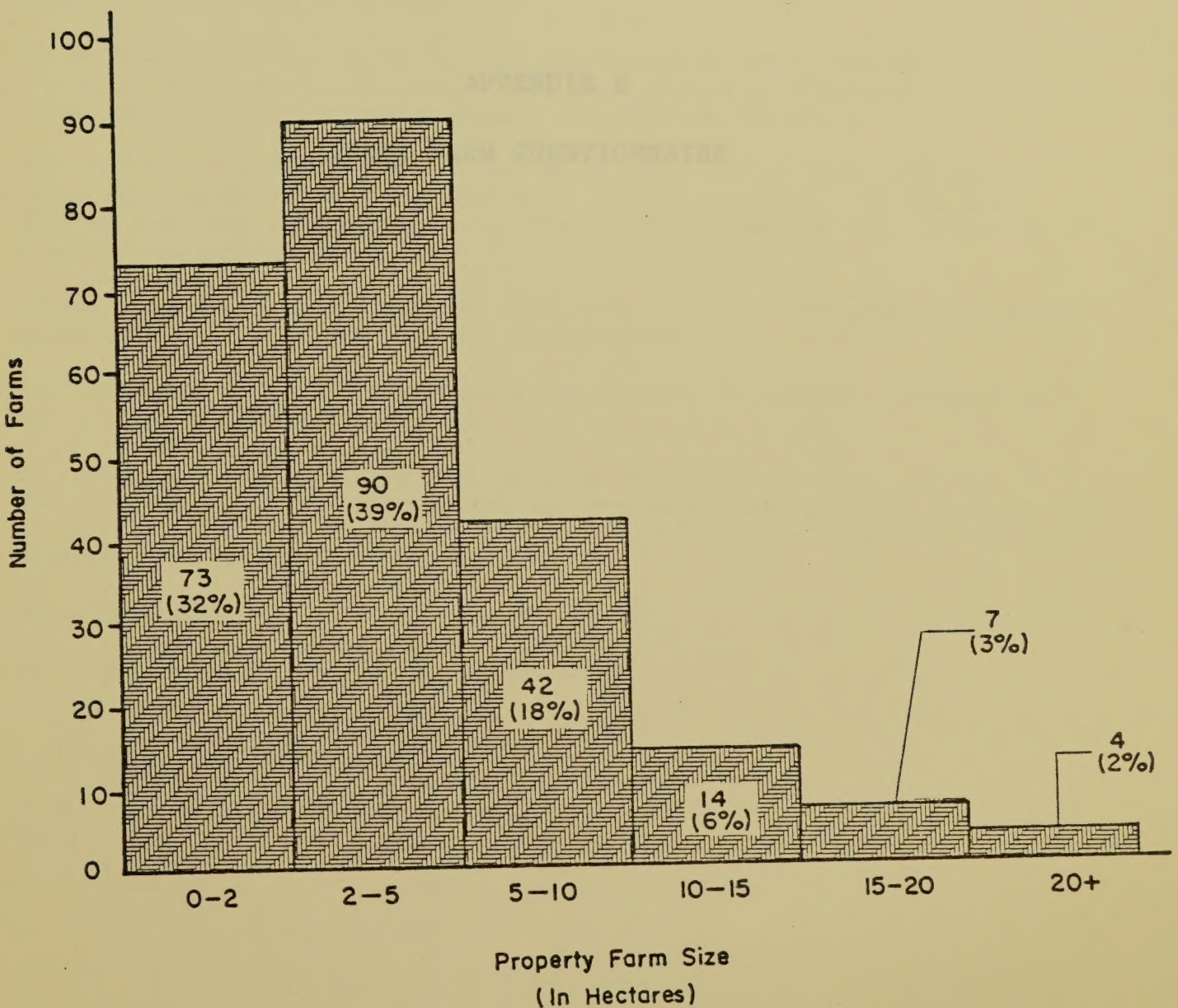
PROPERTY SIZE

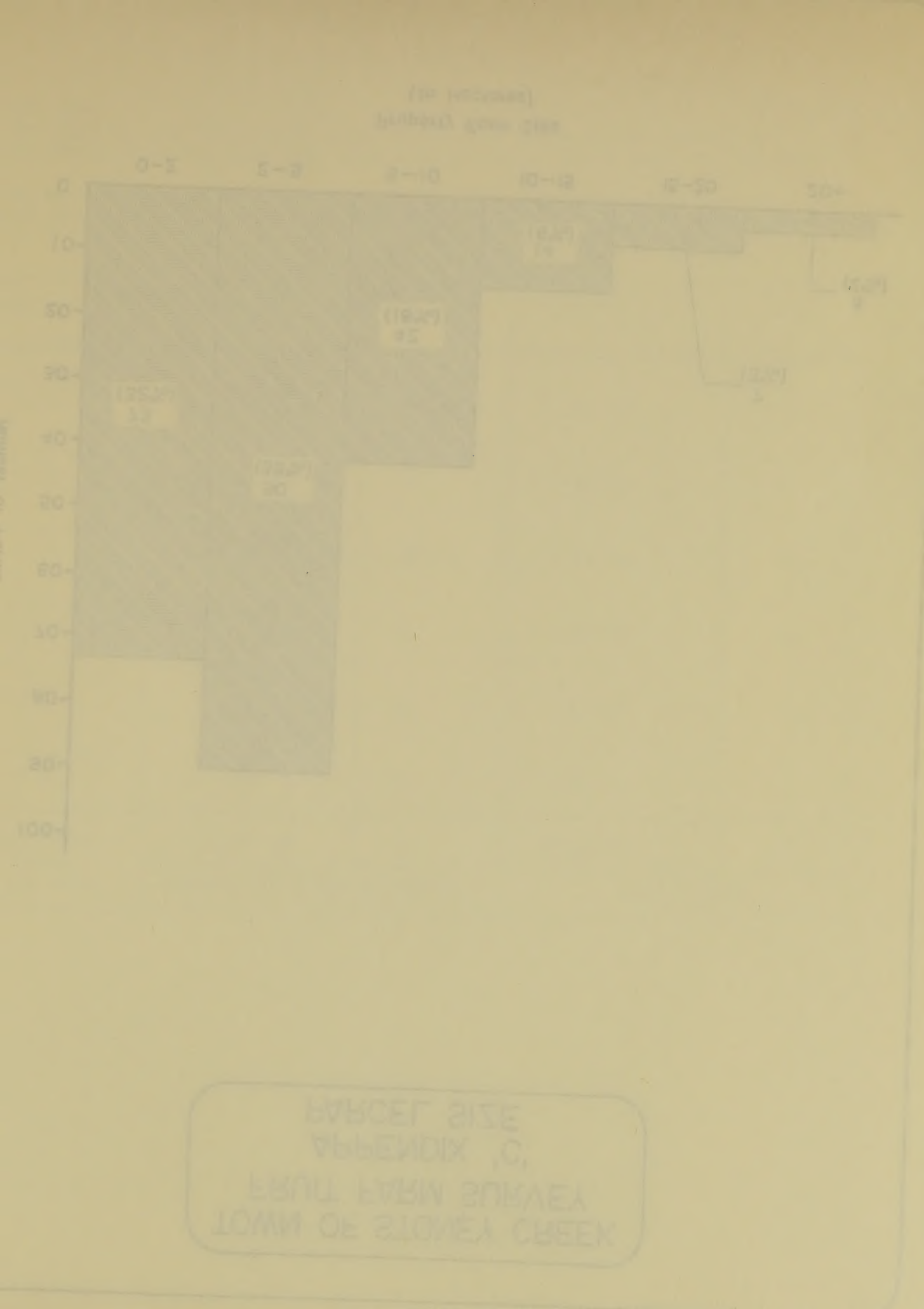
SIZE OF FARM HOLDINGS (HECTARES)	NUMBER OF FARM HOLDINGS		TOTAL AREA	
	TOTAL NO.	%	HECTARES	%
0 - 2 (0 - 4.9 ac.)	73	32	69.58	7
2 - 5 (4.9 - 12.3 ac)	90	39	270.00	27
5 - 10 (12.3 - 24.7 ac)	42	18	264.19	26
10 - 15 (24.7 - 37.0 ac)	14	6	164.90	17
15 - 20 (37.0 - 49.4 ac)	7	3	109.57	11
20 plus (49.4 ac plus)	4	2	126.09	12
TOTALS	230*	100	1004.33**	100

*This figure is broken down with total of 185 farms located on the Lake Plain Area and 45 farms in the area above the Escarpment on Ridge Road.

**This figure is broken down with approximately 866 hectares (86%) in the Lake Plain Area and 138.33 hectares (14%) in the area above the Escarpment on Ridge Road.

TOWN OF STONEY CREEK
FRUIT FARM SURVEY
APPENDIX 'C'
PARCEL SIZE





APPENDIX D

FRUIT FARM QUESTIONNAIRE

The Town of Stoney Creek

777 Highway No. 8 • Fruitland, Ontario L0R 1L0 • Telephone 643-1261

October 8, 1980

To: Owners and Operators of Farm Properties in Northeastern Stoney Creek

We need your help to collect data and opinions about fruit farming and its future in the Town of Stoney Creek. This information will be used to help prepare a new Land Use Plan for our Town, now that most of the Regional Official Plan has been approved.

We are especially interested in your experience of fruit farming as a business, and whether you believe that there should be some part of Stoney Creek designated as a fruit producing area for the future.

This survey is being sent to all owners of ten acres or more land in our rural area north of Ridge Road and east of Fruitland Road. If you are renting your farm to someone who is farming it, please ask your tenant to complete the questionnaire.

As the information which you give us will be used only for planning research purposes, it will be kept strictly confidential.

ONLY BY COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE CAN YOU HELP US IDENTIFY PROBLEMS IN THE CONTINUATION OF FRUIT FARMING.

We look forward to receiving your response by October 31, 1980, by way of the enclosed envelope. If you have any questions concerning the questionnaire, or if you require any additional information, then please call the Planning Department of the Town, 643-1261.

Yours faithfully,

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF STONEY CREEK

Gordon H. Dean

Gordon H. Dean
Mayor

TOWN OF STONEY CREEK

FRUIT FARM QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is intended for research purposes only. All information will be held in strict confidence. Your name is not requested in this questionnaire.

While we wish to collect as much information as possible, you may not wish to answer certain questions. If this is the case, leave the question and move on to another.

Please Print.

Ownership

		Yes	No
a)	Do you own and operate the farm?	☐	☐
b)	Do you rent the farm from someone else?	☐	☐
c)	Do you own additional land elsewhere	☐	☐

Farm Operation

		Yes	No
a)	Does your holding produce fruit at the present time?	☐	☐

If not, what other agricultural operations are undertaken on your holding? Please indicate .....

		Full Time		Part Time
b)	Do you farm	☐	or	☐

c) Number of Months Off _____

		Yes	No
d)	Do you have an Off-farm job?	☐	☐

e) In what year was fruit first grown on the farm? .....

Land Use

(Please answer in acres)

Total Farm Area (acres) ☐

Total Fruit	Peaches	Cherries		Apples	Pears	Plums
		Sweet	Sour			

Apricots	Small Fruit	Grapes	Vegetables	Nursery Prod.

Green House Prod.	Other Mixed Farm Prod.	Total Cultivated Area

Labour

a)	No. of full time farm employees	☐
b)	No. of part time farm employees	☐
c)	No. of occasional workers at peak season	☐

d) Does cost/availability of hired help affect your farming operation? Yes ☐ No ☐

Farm Value

a) Year of farm purchase .....

b) Price per acre at time of purchase .....

c) Present estimated value per acre .....

d) Land severed from holding (acres) .....

e) Estimated Equipment Value $.....

Marketing

a) Do you have a cannery contract? Yes ☐ No ☐

b) Estimated percentage of crops sold fresh _____ %

c) Type of buyers (e.g., shipper, trucker, consumer, pick-your-own). .....

Expenses

Please answer in estimated percentages of total farm expenses.

Labour	Taxes	Fertilizer & Chemicals	Equipment replacement	Other	Total Expenses
.....%	.....%	.....%	.....%	.....%	100%

Net Income

Please answer in estimated percentage of total income

Sales of Fruit	Nursery or Greenhouse	Off-farm Job	Total Income
.....%	.....%	.....%	100%

Future Plans

a) Do you intend to cut back ☐

maintain ☐

expand ☐

b) Do you intend to purchase additional lands Yes ☐ No ☐

c) Do you intend to reduce farm costs Yes ☐ No ☐

How? .....

Farm Viability

Do you think your farm is a viable operation and can support you and your family? Yes ☐ No ☐

Opinions

a) What are the most pressing problems for you as a fruit farmer?

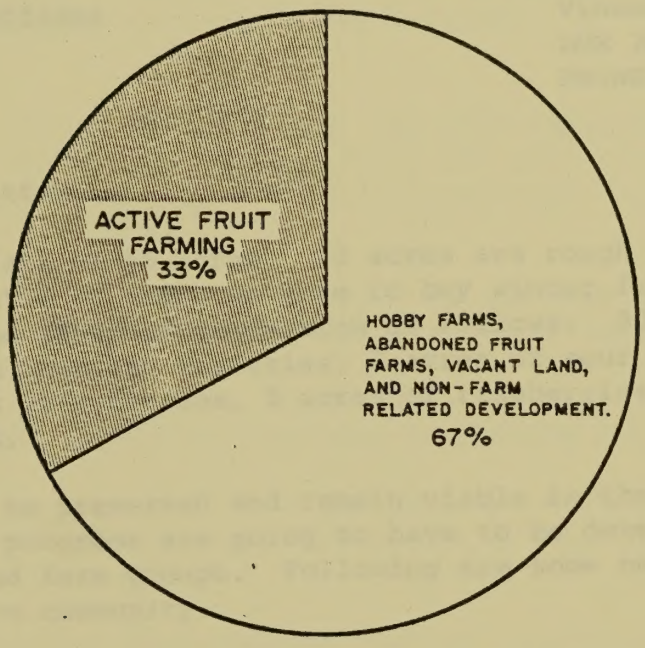
Opinions	b) Are you in favour of the preservation of the fruit belt?
	c) What are your reasons for feeling this way?
	d) If you favour saving fruit lands in Stoney Creek, how do you believe they can best be preserved?
	e) If your property is not being farmed at present, please indicate reasons.
	f) Other comments.

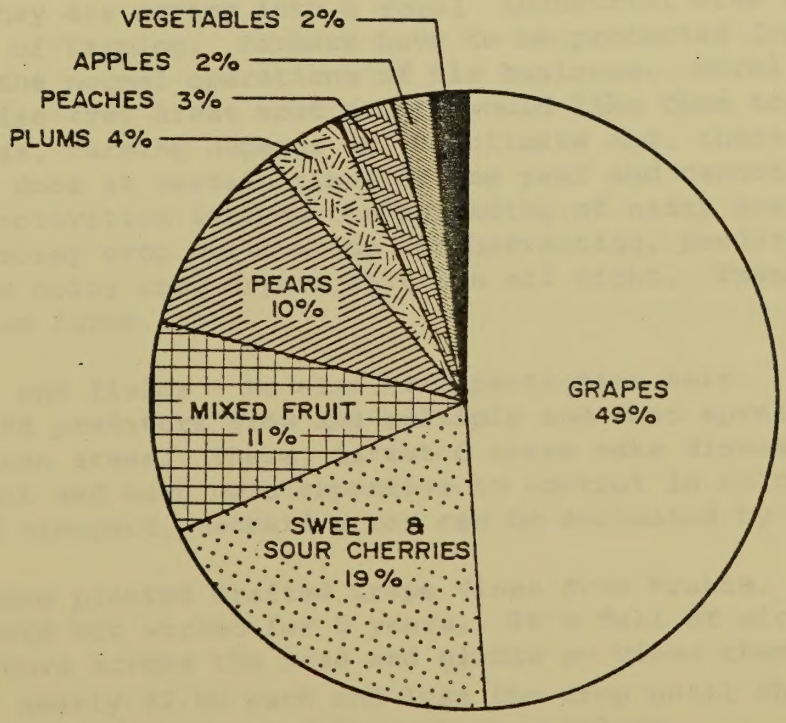
TOWN OF STONEY CREEK FRUIT FARM SURVEY

APPENDIX 'E'

LAND USE WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

STUDY AREA GENERAL LAND USE





ACTIVE FRUIT FARMING AREA

Prepared by: Town of Stoney Creek
Planning Department

THIS LETTER TYPED VERBATIM FROM THE ORIGINAL

Ron Marini
Agricultural Survey
Town Planning Committee
Stoney Creek Municipal Offices
777 Highway No. 8
Stoney Creek, Ont.

February, 1981.
1315 Ridge Road
R.R. #1
Vinemount, Ont.
LOR 2GO
PHONE: 643-2274

Dear Town Planning Committee:

Presently our farm consists of 65 acres. 25 acres are rough pasture and brush for a few beef cattle of which we have to buy winter feed for - 40 acres are in fruit and vineyard production as follows: 30 acres of vineyard French Hybrid & American Varieties, 3 acres of sour cherries, 3 acres of pick-your-own strawberries, 2 acres of raspberries, and the rest of apples and pears.

If farmland is going to be preserved and remain viable in the Town of Stoney Creek, then radical new programs are going to have to be developed by all levels of governments and farm groups. Following are some necessary changes if we want a healthy farm community.

First off, we have to recognize that farming is an industry, just as manufacturing is an industry. If families (people) are going to move out to rural areas or co-exist in suburban areas with farming, then they have to be aware that they are moving into a rural industrial area where the industry is the business of Farming. Farmers have to be protected from complaints harassment in the normal operations of his business. Rural areas are not the odor and noise-free areas most people would like them to be. For financial success, farming depends on the climate and, therefore, certain jobs have to be done at certain times of the year and cannot wait. Some of our unpleasant activities include the spreading of nasty smelling manure, crop spraying, noisy crop cultivation and harvesting, predator control and/or bird scarers and noisy crop dryers that run all night. These all comprise daily routines on farms.

Abandoned farms and fields - We also need protection here. These are areas where disease and predators grow and multiply and then spread over into ongoing production areas. These infested areas make disease and predator control difficult and much more expensive to control in cultivated areas. Whole crops and vineyard, orchard areas can be decimated by these problems.

In my case, I have planted Grafted Grape Vines from France. Across the road is an old vineyard not worked for 5 years. It's full of mice and berry moth. If they move across the road and girdle my vines then I have to replace them at nearly $2.00 each and lose the crop until the new plant matures. We have to be protected from these problems.

SOLUTIONS - It does not cost that much to bulldoze out an old orchard or vineyard. Nor does it cost that much to cut weeds a few times a year in an open field. If, after several warnings a property owner does not clean up a problem area, the Region should have the power to move in, clean it up and add the cost onto that property owner's taxes.

Traffic - In my situation, I sell pick-your-own strawberries and grapes to home wine-makers. At certain peak times, 50 to 100 cars will pass in and out of my operation in a single day. I can't have people complaining about traffic if I am to make a living.

Zoning - You cannot preserve agricultural land in the Town of Stoney Creek simply by zoning it Agriculture. Co-operative Programs have to be developed between all levels of Government. Farming has to be made lucrative and attractive. If incentives are there, then farming will attract better managers who will, at the same time, increase production per acre.

Farmers should be paid the same as industrial people. This would certainly increase food prices, but not that much, as there is only about 5¢ of wheat in a 90¢ loaf of bread, for example.

We also need protection from cheap imports through drastically increased tariffs. Cheap labour and land is certainly a big factor in imported goods that we lost markets to. We need to keep Canadian Dollars here as in many cases, countries sell us goods cheaply just to get Canadian Dollars.

This brings up the issue of subsidies. I do not agree with being subsidized but many of the foods that arrive here are heavily subsidized. Subsidies paid to farmers would be one way of increasing production and preserving farmland.

In the Town of Stoney Creek, we are peculiar in that we have vineyards for wine production. Support of Ontario Wine sales in grocery stores would create a great increase in demand for Ontario Winers. Many new acres would have to be planted to fill this demand. This would help reverse the trend of land going out of production.

Also, you should permit small or farm wineries such as California and Europe.

There is great romance and mystique surrounding the wine industry which will eventually create a great boom to the tourist industry of the Niagara Peninsula.

Product labelling should be changed to reflect the country of origin of the product not just where it was manufactured. For instance, let's look at Quebec Wines. They are mostly produced from imported juices and concentrates, not Canadian grown produce. Strawberry farm is another one. Consumers probably are not aware that most produce of Canada strawberry jam is not manufactured from Canadian grown strawberries.

Garbage from the Town of Stoney Creek should be recycled and composted with sewage sludge and wastes from plants such as E. D. Smith, not landfilled. Compost provides the farmer with an excellent soilbuilder and weed-free fertilizer. This results in increased production and can help keep food costs down. This is being done atthe Ministry of Environment Plant at Downsview, Ontario, and by Agpro Industries at Colbourne, Ontario, under the direction of Dr. Les Emery (see page 125 of Harrowsmith Magazine #33). Most garbage should not be landfilled.

This brings up another issue, that garbage and hazardous chemicals should not be treated and landfilled in rural areas. If these materials are deemed safe enough to be manufactured in industrial areas then they should be disposed of in these areas. Note, the Agpro Industries Composting Plant is located in an Industrial Park.

We also should start looking at the co-existence of the agriculture industry with manufacturing industries:

For Example: (a) Waste Heat from industry can heat greenhouses for winter vegetable production.

(b) Methane production from wastes and manure can produce electric energy for the farm and heat for buildings. Surplus electricity could be sold to the Town Hydro Utility.

(c) Alcohol Production for a liquid fuel can replace gasoline and petrochemicals for plastic. Jerusalem Artichoke is a plant which produces high yields per acre of alcohol (400 gallons per acre versus 200 from corn or wheat). It will grow most anywhere. This crop has the potential of putting all of these abandoned fields and orchards to a good use.

Now you may laugh at some of these suggestions, but they are valid ways of helping save agriculture in the Town of Stoney Creek. Keep in mind that a healthy farm community employ people all across society and buys the services of business and industry.

Unless Society is prepared to buy up Agricultural Land to preserve the farmland, then don't zone us and lock up farmers into agriculture unless society is prepared to make radical changes to keep farming viable. Just look at Russia to see what happens with State owned farms. The farm community also has responsibility to work with society as a whole to make necessary change for farming to be successful in the future.

TODAY'S PICTURE:

If I look at fruit and vineyard production as it stands today in the Town of Stoney Creek, I can easily argue that we do not need to save any of it. Let's build industry and housing. Following are some examples of why we don't need Stoney Creek Fruitlands.

First, all the crops except peaches and maybe vinefra grape varieties can be grown and are being grown outside the boundaries of the Town of Stoney Creek. Pears, apples, plums and strawberries can be grown in many places of southern Ontario where land is much cheaper. Grapes can be grown throughout the Niagara Peninsula and now down in south-western Ontario. Peaches are the only rear issue, but they prefer the sandy to sandy-loam soils of Beamsville, St. Catharines to Niagara-on-the-Lake area. I understand that much of the land below the escarpment in question is of pretty heavy clay with only a few real good sandy, sandy loam pockets.

Looking at grapes, there was a surplus last year of Concords and a huge surplus I believe in 1975 or 1977. We can certainly lose all the Concords in the Town without hurting the present market situation a bit. When I talked to 'Andres' a little while ago, they aren't looking for any more Concords either. The same can be said for sour cherries. The price was cut in half last summer as it is cheaper for E. D. Smith to bring in imports. The only other large canning factory, Canadian Canners, is American-owned.

There is so much imported produce, the consumer would never ever notice if Stoney Creek Fruitlands that remain disappear.

The one crop I benefit the most from, strawberries, requires a lot of expensive land, labour and irrigation of which I only have a limited water supply. I feel I only do well on them because I don't have much competition. I am probably the only grower in the Town of Stoney Creek with over one acre.

Also, land is too expensive for agriculture at $10,000.00 an acre - who can buy it to farm. One could not even meet the interest payments and develop land for fruit or vineyards.

For the above-mentioned reasons, I can't see why we should save Town of Stoney Creek Farmlands for Agriculture.

CONCLUSION:

I realize that what I have said does not rely strictly on zoning. I stress though, that these things I have mentioned are interdependent on each other like pieces of a puzzle to look at the whole picture. If farmland is to be saved in the Town, it will require a great amount of thought and work to find solutions, otherwise, we might as well let the land go for housing and industry as there are lots of other areas where the same crops can be grown more cheaply for the consumer. I for one, do not wish to be zoned into agriculture if I cannot make a financial success of it and have protection to carry out my business. If that is not possible, then I should have the right to sell to the highest bidder for whatever use he proposes or the Town or N.E.C. buy the land at fair market value. A good example of this is the George Coker Farm which was up for sale for two years and no one bought it for farming. Not when someone proposes to buy it and develop an excellent park as well as preserve the fruit trees. People are trying to stop this, but it was on the open market for two years. This park is being developed under existing zoning definitions. If it is not safe to have fruit trees and vineyards on park premises (which the Conservation Authority does) then there is not much real reason to save these trees and vineyards. It won't take long to bulldoze and remove them and relandscape.

Also, from my perspective, if Niagara Alpine Trail Park does not go through, which I believe will make me more viable through more direct farm sales, it's possible that you won't just lose the Coker Farm, but my farm as well. I own 26 acres of the total 65 and there is no way I will ever be able to purchase it and pay off interest charges.

Respectfully Yours,

Bryce Weylie

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